
Mr. WALROND's
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

United Ministers

O F

DEVON and CORNWALL,

On May 7th, 1707.

®

S

THE NEW YORK

STREET

NEW YORK

United Nations

OF

THE NEW YORK

1945

The Dignity of the Ministry.

A *693. e. 16*
SERMON^d

Preach'd at EXON, May 7. 1707.

BEFORE AN
ASSEMBLY
OF THE
United Ministers
OF

DEVON and CORNWALL.

K. Walrond
By J. W. Minister of the Gospel.

Rom. xi. 13. *For I speak to you Gentiles, in
as much as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles,
I magnifie my Office.*

LONDON:

Printed for Jonathan Robinson, at the Golden-Lyon in
St. Paul's Church-yard; and are to be Sold by
Philip Bishop, Bookseller in Exon. 1707.

The Ministry of the Gospel

A
SERMON

Preached at EXON May 7. 1707.

BEFORE AN

ASSEMBLY

OF THE

United Ministers

OF

DEVON and CORNWALL

By J. W. Minister of the Gospel.

Rom. xii. 13. For I speak to you Gentiles, as much as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles. I magnify my Office.

LONDON:

Printed for Thomas Rivington, at the Golden-Lyon in St. Paul's Church-yard: and are to be sold by Philip Bliss, Bookseller in Exon. 1707.

**TO THE
United Ministers**

**OF
DEVON and CORNWALL,**
That Assemble in the City of
of EXON, for promoting the
Peace and Order of their severall
CHURCHES.

Reverend SIRS;

AS it was your Command
that gave me the Boldness to
Preach the following Sermon before
you ; so it was the Desire of many
of your Body afterwards, that put me
upon a greater Adventure, of ma-
king it publick to the World. A
Thing, which heretofore I have
A 3 had

The Dedication.

~~had the greatest Aversion to ; And~~
~~Should scarce find the Courage to~~
~~run this Hazard now ; had not the~~
~~better Judgments of others assur'd~~
~~me, it might conduce to the publick~~
Benefit.

THIS Argument, I confess,
prevail'd with me ; Because it in-
cludes in it the very End of my Life
and Studies, which requires me to
sacrifice my Reputation, and every
thing else that is dear thereunto.

*I*N the Preparation of it, I con-
sulted nothing but my Duty ; and
therefore endeavour'd to accommodate
it to the present Purpose ; so, as
it might best suit with the Circum-
stances of the Church we are fallen
under. And as I had long since
learn'd, not to confine Religion to
any PARTY of Protestants what-
soever, I have calculated it for the
Ministry in general ; without any
particular

The Dedication

particular Aspect upon this or that Distinction of Christians. If I have taken too great a Liberty in any thing I have said, it must be imputed to my Zeal for the Church of Christ, whose Welfare doth so much consist in the Integrity and Reputation of the Ministry.

ALL kinds of PIOUS FRAUDS, and every base Mixture, that is apt to insinuate into this HOLY CALLING, I heartily detest and explode; being convinc'd that it ought to be preserv'd as bright and pure as it was receiv'd from Christ and his Apostles. I'm sensible, there is a Leaven of PRIDE and INTEREST, that is subtle enough to work it self into Men of all Persuasions; which is aggravated by our common Adversaries to the Disgrace of the Ministry; both among Christians and Infidels. This is what I appear a sworn Ene-

The Dedication.

my against ; and endeavour to rebuke, both in my self and others. Imperfections are inseparable from the present State ; but there are some inexcusable Sins and Errors, which the faithful Servant of Christ is bound to condemn without Partiality or Reserve : and many, that seem too peculiar to the SCHOLAR and DIVINE.

AGAINST these we must be open and bold : For indeed, it is impossible those Blemishes which are found upon that Order of Men, whose Profession obliges 'em to stand in the Light, should admit of any Cover or Disguise. And therefore it is much better to acknowledge and reprove 'em with open Face.

IN this Sermon, I dare say, I can acquit my self of the Guilt of Flattery, both to Ministers and People. And as I have rendred
to

The Dedication

to **LEVI** the things that are **LEVY'S**; so I have been careful that the **ELEVEN TRIBES** should receive their Portion, whether of Reproofs or Acknowledgments. This, I conceiv'd, my Duty and Station call'd me to; which gives me some Hopes, that it will also be my Apology for that general Air of Freedom, which appears in the following Discourse.

BEFORE I conclude this Address, give me leave to Congratulate the mutual Love, Unanimity, and Concord, which is so happily preserv'd amongst You; and to applaud the Decency and Respect, wherewith you carry it towards our Brethren of the **ESTABLISH'D CHURCH**, of which I am a Joyful Witness. And I now mention it, not without Hope, that after longer Time and Experience it
may

The Dedication.

may dispose 'em to more favourable Thoughts of us, and a nearer UNION.

MAY the God of Love and Peace, crown all your Endeavours with abundant Success in the Conversion of Sinners; And your Holy Lives and Faithful Labours bid Defiance to the Accusations of your Enemies; but effectually engage the Good Opinion of those, whose Souls are too Great for a PARTY; and therefore, I may add, too Good to condemn their Brethren, whose Judgments do not in every thing tally with theirs. But let Charity supply what is wanting in Judgment; and be, at present, an Advocate to relieve the Infirmities of,

Reverend SIRS,

Your most Unworthy Brother
and Fellow-Servant,

John Walrond.

(1)

SERMON

Preach'd before an

ASSEMBLY of DIVINES

IN THE

City of EXON, &c.

ROM. XI. 13. latter Clause.

**—I MAGNIFIE MINE
OFFICE.**

IF YOU consider the Scope and Design of this Chapter, you shall find it is intended, partly for the Preservation of the *JEW*S from *Dejection* and *Despair*; and partly for the Prevention of *Pride* and *Arragance* in the *GENTILES*.

AS

AS to the *former*, The *APOSTLE* tells 'em, that, altho' God had now rejected them for their Contempt of Christ, and the Grace of the Gospel; yet this Rejection was neither *total* nor *final*.

NOT *total*, because many of the Seed of *Abraham* had already believed in his Name.

NOR *final*, because, tho' the *natural Branches* were at present *broken off*; yet, if they continued not in *obstinate Unbelief*, they should hereafter *be grafted in again*.

AS to the *latter*, He prescribes to 'em *Meekness* and *Fear*; lest after they had been ingrafted into the *Good Olive-tree*, they should, for their Security and Barrenness, be broken off; as the *J E W S* had been, who were the *natural Branches*.

THE *J E W S* had the *first Offer* of the Gospel, but they despis'd it; upon which, it took its flight among the *GENTILES*, and there it was accepted, *Verse 11. Through their Fall, Salvation is come unto the Gentiles to provoke them to Jealousie.* St. *PAUL*, there-

therefore, was in a more peculiar manner sent upon this Errand to the *Gentile-World*; and yet, not so *distinctly*, but that we find him sometimes in the *Synagogues* also. As, on the other hand, St. PETER was employ'd about CORNELIUS, and other *Gentiles*; as occasion requir'd.

BUT the Spirit of God had especially appointed to the Ministry of St. Paul such *Provinces*, in which were found the fewest *Israelites*; and those again to the Ministry of St. Peter, in which there were the fewest *Gentiles*.

UPON this Account, St. PAUL is here stil'd, the APOSTLE of the GENTILES; And accordingly, He labour'd above all things, to render his Ministry among 'em very Glorious. His Office it self was honourable: An APOSTLE; a Servant of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, of no ordinary Nature or Character, 1 Cor. xii. 28. God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, &c. He was an Eye in the Body, not a Foot. An APOSTLE of the GENTILES, to proclaim the glad Tidings of Salvation

tion to the Pagan World, which had seem'd for so many Ages to have been neglected. In this He was very nearly conform'd to his Lord and Master, who was given for a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*. And in this Title we find His glories, in several places. *Rom. xv. 16.* He speaks of the *Grace which was given him of God, that he should be the Minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.* *1 Tim. ii. 7.* *A Teacher of the Gentiles in Faith and Verity.*

NOW, that he might duly answer so Sacred a Trust, and so great a Dignity, He endeavour'd to the utmost of his Power to magnifie his Ministry, by a plentiful Conversion of the Heathen. For Christ having not only invested him in an Honourable Office, but, which was much greater, made him faithful in it; He was loth to be a Reproach, or any thing but an Honour, and an Ornament to his Holy Calling. Therefore, says He, *I MAGNIFIE MYNE OFFICE.* *Τὸ διακονίαν μου δοξάζω,* which if we translate literally, is, *I glorifie my Ministry.* I labour to Convert the Gentiles, and by their Conversion,

tion to provoke the *Jews* to Emulation;
that I may every way exalt the Mini-
stration of Grace in the Gospel.

THE Point of Doctrine I shall in-
fer from hence, is this:

**THAT IT SHOULD BE
THE STUDY AND CARE
OF EVERY MINISTER OF
CHRIST TO ADORN HIS
MINISTRY.**

ALL that I shall attempt to do up-
on this Subject, will be to shew these
two things.

**I. THAT the Ministry of the Gospel,
is a very high and important Office.**

**II. HOW it behoves every Servant of
Christ, in this Ministry, to comport with
it, and to magnify it.**

**I. I WOULD endeavour to shew,
That the Ministry of the Gospel, is a very
high and important Office.**

Which will appear, if we consider,
**THE TITLES given to those Spi-
ritual Officers.**

THE SUBJECT of their Ministry, or the great Things that they are conversant about.

THE WORK they are to discharge
And

THE ISSUE and Consequence of all, Salvation or Damnation, Eternal Life or Death.

I. THE TITLES given to those Spiritual Officers. And as to them, I need go no further than the New Testament, to find out their Marks of Distinction.

There, they are styl'd,

MINISTERS in the Service of Christ; which tho' in itself, it be an humble Title; yet if we consider about what it is they Minister, about Holy Things; whose Servants they are, the Servants of the **GREAT KING**; what is the Subject of their Ministration; the unsearchable Riches of Christ we shall not think it low or little; especially since we know, who took this Title upon himself first, *Matth. xx. 28.* The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

ELDERS among his People; to intimate their Experience in the Knowledge

ledge of Christ; and the *Awe* and *Gravity* of their Employment; and to signify the Influence they should have upon all those that were but *Novices* in Religion, 1 Pet. 5. 1. *The Elders that are among you, I exhort, who are also an Elder, and a Witness of the Sufferings of Christ.*

BISHOPS or **OVERSEERS** in his Church; to signify not so much the *Authority* of their Office, as the *Work* and *Duty* of it: To inspect the *Necessities* and *Infirmities* of the People, and to watch over 'em, *Acts xx. 28. Take heed unto the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you Overseers.* And upon the same account, they are also styl'd **WATCHMEN**; to warn *Sinners of their Error and Danger*, and vigilantly to protect 'em from the *Snares* of their *Spiritual Enemies*, *Heb. xiii. 17. For they watch for your Souls, as they that must give Account.*

LABOURERS and *Workmen*, *Builders*, and *Planters*; to shew how *Useful* and *Necessary* they are in the *Church of Christ.*

PASTORS and *Shepherds in his Fold*,
under Christ the *Great Shepherd and Bi-*
shop of Souls.

STEWARDS *in his Family*; to di-
spence to every one his proper *Portion*
in due season.

SOLDIERS and *Champions in*
his Cause; to contend earnestly for the
Faith which was once deliver'd to the
Saints.

AMBASSADORS *in his Kingdom*;
sent forth upon the noble Design of
offering Life and Peace to a sinful re-
bellious World, 2 Cor. v. 20. Now then,
we are *Ambassadors for Christ*, as though
God did beseech you by us, we pray
you in *Christ's stead*, be ye reconciled to
God. Nay,

ANGELS *in the Heavenly Ministry*
they are employ'd about; to pass between
God and the People, and between the
People and God: to publish his Will
from Heaven, and to offer up their Pe-
titions from the Earth, Rev. ii. 1. To
the *Angel of the Church of Ephesus*. 2 Cor.
viii. 23. — *The Angels of the Churches,*
and the glory of Christ.

ALL these Titles signify the Necessity and Importance of their Office ; And that it is as possible for a great Work to be effected without an Instrument or Workman ; A large House as well managed without a Steward ; A Flock as safely fed and guarded without a Shepherd ; The Affairs of Kingdoms as well carry'd on without Ambassadors, &c. as for the Church of Christ to be supported and continu'd without the Office of the Ministry.

2. FROM the SUBJECT of their Ministry, or those great Things they are to be conversant about. And they are all Spiritual and Immortal ; of the noblest Nature, and of the highest Value. For whatever these Officers do in their Ministry, hath a very near and direct relation to the NAME of God, and the SOULS of Men.

THE NAME of God, and the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ is concern'd herein. For they are to represent God in Christ to the Understandings and Affections of Men, according to Truth ; and in a manner becoming the Perfections of his Divine Nature,

Nature, and his Infinite *Love* and *Grace* towards Mankind. They are to be often engag'd in the solemn *Worship* and *Presence* of the Holy God; and both in their Personal and Publick Capacities, are to bear his *Testimony*, and glorify his *Name* before the World, and to promote his *Kingdom* among Men; nay, and, under the Great Advocate, to be *Interceeders* for the People of God.

AND, as they are concern'd about the *Name* and *Worship* of God, so they are continually to employ themselves in behalf of the lost SOULS of Men, in order to recover 'em out of the *Snare* of the Devil; and that, with great variety of *Skill* and *Application*: On some having *Compassion*, (*making a difference*) and others saving with fear, pulling them out of the *Fire*, Jude 22, 23. Their Office is not *Secular* and earthly, but entirely *Spiritual* and relates to the better *Part*. They are to be the *Physicians* of Souls, to revive 'em out of their Mortal Condition, by reason of Sin; and to nourish, and train 'em up for *Heaven*.

3. *FROM the WORK they are to discharge. The Duties of the Ministry are very great and difficult. They are to serve God with their Spirits in the Gospel of his Son ; to preach the Word in season, and out of season, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with all Long-suffering and Doctrine, 2 Tim. iv. 2. They are to feed the Flock with the Bread of Life, which came down from Heaven ; to provide Milk for Babes, and strong Meat for them that are of full Age. They are to instruct the Ignorant, comfort the Feeble-minded, support the Weak, satisfy the Doubting, bear with the Infirmities of Saints, endure the Contradiction of Sinners, endeavour to reconcile Differences, confute Errors, defend the Truths they Preach, and silence Gain-sayers. They are to administer all Ordinances to those that have a Right to 'em, but couragiously to debar the Unworthy ; not breaking the bruised Reed, nor quenching the smoking Flax, yet sending forth Judgment unto Truth ; and are so to Govern, Feed, and Guard the Church of Christ, that no Souls may miscarry through their negligence or mismanagement.*

B 3

ment. And that Ministers may duly *qualify* themselves for so great a WORK, How should they be reading and praying, studying, meditating, and consulting their own Hearts! And what Care are they oblig'd to take of *themselves*, of their *Doctrine*, manner of *Life*, and *Conversation*; giving no offence in anything, that the Ministry be not blamed, 2 Cor. vi. 3.

4. FROM the ISSUE and CONSEQUENCE of all; which will redound either to Eternal Life, or Death. Our Work is of that Nature, that it is not a thing *indifferent*, whether we succeed in it or no: Our Office is not concern'd about the *transient Affairs* of this Life; that what is done amiss to Day, may be corrected to Morrow; or if it is never amended, the damage can arise to no great Account. But this is of *everlasting Consequence*; it touches the very *Life* of Souls; and if any fail of the Grace of God through the Error or Unfaithfulness of the Minister, the loss is *irreparable*. Accordingly, we read of DAMNABLE Doctrines; and of the Words of some, *that eat as doth*

doth a CANKER, and of being the savour of DEATH unto DEATH. These things make us exceedingly fear and quake.

FOR we know, that if we prosper in our Ministry, it shall conduce to the *Eternal Life* of many Souls in Heaven; But if our Ministry be *blasted*, it will cost 'em the *loss* of their Souls in Hell. A Minister then, is sent to his People, either in *Mercy* or *Judgment*; as one of the greatest *Blessings* in the World, or else as the heaviest *Curse* that can befall 'em on this side Damnation. A good Minister, that comes in the *fulness of the Blessing of the Gospel of Christ*, is sent forth as an *Angel* from Heaven, carrying the Everlasting Covenant to them that dwell on the Earth; *His Feet are beautiful upon the Mountains with the glad Tidings of Peace*: But a corrupt, idle, prophane Minister is suffer'd to appear as a dark SPECTRUM, a Fiend of Hell; to be a *blind Guide* to mislead the Blind, to sow Pillows, to harden Hearts, and to seal up seered Consciences to the Day of Vengeance. And how many Thousands He may be

instrumental in betraying into *Perdition*, I need not mention; since the *Groans* of so many Churches, and the *Spoils* of Souls, do from every Quarter declare it.

2. I PROCEED in the next place to enquire, *In what manner the Ministers of the Gospel are oblig'd to comport with their Ministry, and to magnify their Office?*

TO this I answer.

NOT by PRIDE and *Haughtiness*, a supercilious Contempt of other People, as if because they are above 'em in the Pulpit, they must be thought superiour in *every thing* else.

NOT by OSTENTATION of *Humane Learning* or gaudy Rhetorick, the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth; and which tendeth to make the Cross of Christ of none effect.

NOT by Artificial Methods, secret and selfish Designs; which is justly call'd PRIEST-CRAFT, the most odious, ignominious Term in the World; and which the Disciples of Christ, in the least Imputation of it, should be most jealous of, and vigilant against.

NOT

NOT by Worldly Policies and Secular Engagements; ambitiously aspiring after the *Kingdoms of this World*, or the *Glories of 'em*; which is the Spirit of *Antichrist*, and not of *Christ*.

NOT by fierce Disputings, or uncharitable *Censures*, or bold *Condemnations* of others: not by a *Power of Persecution*, by arbitrary *Anathema's* and *Excommunications*, or by *Horrid Inquisitions*, under the name of *Holy Tribunals*. None of these things can ever magnify their Office; tho' so many make use of 'em to this purpose.

HOW shall they then endeavour it? I answer, If they would *adorn* and *enforce* their Ministry, they can never take a more effectual Method, than that which our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles us'd to convert the World.

I. BY *Labour and Travel*; by a diligent and painful Execution of the Duties of their Office; by gathering and converting Souls unto Jesus Christ, *Prov. xi. 30. He that winneth Souls is wise.* Let 'em above all things study and seek the *Salvation* of their People;
for

for it is their holy and obedient Practice, that shall crown the Preacher: *1 Thess. ii. 20. Ye are our Glory and Joy.* This will be an effectual way to deliver the Ministry from *Contempt*, and to obtain that substantial *Credit* and *Estimation* (which is so desirable) in the Hearts of wise and good Men. And it will be found sufficient to disperse those *Fumes* of Prejudice which the Devil hath rais'd in the Breasts of so many against this *Sacred Order*. Let 'em heartily endeavour to do all the good they can to the Souls of Men, and then they need not doubt of their tender Regard for them again. For if it be natural for Children to love their *Parents*, we are sure, a converted Soul cannot forget to love its *Spiritual Father*; one that *hath begotten him in the Gospel*. Let 'em labour then to *turn many unto Righteousness*; which if they do, will be the way to establish an unblemish'd Reputation upon their Ministry.

BUT, on the contrary, As *Barrenness* was ever thought a *Reproach in Israel*, let 'em take heed of a vain and fruitless

fruitless Ministration, that they do not go *Childless* to their Graves : But that some Souls may bless 'em, and bless God for 'em, that they were successful to their Regeneration and Salvation. I grant, this is not in their *Power* ; but surely, if they are *faithful* in their Labours and Endeavours, they may then *sow in Hope*, and be partakers of their *Hope* : If they *Plant and Water* diligently, they are like to receive the *Increase*. They that *labour in the Lord*, do seldom *labour in vain*.

2. BY the Contempt of Riches and *filthy Lucre* ; by a separation of themselves from all worldly Occupations ; not greedily desiring, nor tenaciously with-holding, nor proudly glorying in the Plenty of this *World's Goods*. For it being the great Business of the Ministers of *Christ*, to take off People's Hearts from the *World*, they ought to shew how much they are above it themselves. It was St. Paul's Protestation to the Corinthians, *I seek not Yours, but You*, 2 Cor. xii. 14. The Treasure I desire, is not your *Purses*, but your *Souls* : *I have coveted no Man's Silver or Gold,*

Gold; or Apparel. This was the Primitive Spirit. Let all Ministers remember, that they are not serving *MAMMON*, but *CHRIST*; that they may never prostitute a *Glorious Ministry* to a *Sordid Interest*.

AND as *Worldly Advantage* ought not to be made the *End* of their Ministry, so, on the other hand, they are bound to be *Charitable* and *Bountiful*, as far as their *Circumstances* will admit, and their *Duty* require. For, as the *Bishop* must not be *greedy of filthy Lucre*, so He ought to be *given to Hospitality*, 1 *Tim.* iii. 2. Which I cannot understand to be a treating of the *Rich*, but a feeding of the *Poor Brethren*; and more especially, *Christian Strangers*.

3. BY *despising outward Pomp and Vain-glory*. Not aiming at *high Stations* and *Preferments* in the *World*; which hath been the *Bane* of the *Church* since the *Days of Constantine*: Not assuming a *Grandure* above what becomes the *Servants* of so *meek* and *lowly* a *Master*; Not giving or receiving *Flattering Titles*; Not *Lording it over God's Heritage*, but being *Ensamples to the Flock*;

*Flock ; remembering who it was that washed the Disciples Feet, with this Exhortation, that they should do as He had done unto 'em ; condescending to Visit, to Instruct, to Comfort the * meanest Member in the Church of Christ, as well as the greatest : Nay, often stooping to comply with the Ignorant, the Prejudic'd, the Erroneous, the Peevish and Discontented ; that by all means they might gain some.*

THIS is to be the true *Disciples* and *Followers* of Christ Jesus ; who, tho' He was in the *Form of God*, and thought it not Robbery to be equal with God ; yet made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the *Form of a Servant*, Phil. ii. 6, 7. And this is what will turn greatly to their own *Advantage* ; for the more deeply they humble themselves now, the higher will their *Exaltation* be hereafter. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name, verse 9. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

* Δούλοις ἡ δούλας μὴ ὑπερηγάν. Ignat. Epist. ad Polycarp.

4. BY a patient Suffering the Evils of the World for the sake of Christ. A Minister is set as a City upon a Hill, and must expect to be observ'd and censur'd; to pass through Honour and Dishonour; through Evil Report, and Good Report; as a Deceiver, and yet True. Reproaches are a part of the Flood which the Dragon casts forth out of his Mouth. And whatever Persecutions are rais'd against the Church, to be sure, the first and greatest Part will fall to the Ministers Share, if He be stedfast and faithful. And indeed, when there is no publick Opposition, their own People may be made a greater Scourge and Trial to 'em, by mutual Enmity, by Breaches and Distractions in the same Communion; or by an evident Dislike and Contempt of their Labours. I doubt, I may truly say, It often happens; that the People deal with their Ministers as Hunters deal with Hedges; in fair Weather they ride over 'em with Disdain, but when a Storm comes, they flee to 'em for Shelter.

BUT

BUT, my Brethren, let *none of these things move us, neither let us count our Life to be dear to our selves, so that we may finish our Course with Joy, and fulfil the Ministry committed to us.* Let Patience have its perfect Work ; and let the World see, that we are able to suffer, as well as labour, for the sake of Christ.

OUR Predecessors, I am sure, gave us a glorious Example of *suffering Affliction, and of Patience ;* and as it was not the *Fury* of those, who are since gone to Judgment with 'em, that could pervert or discourage 'em, *then ;* so it is beyond the *Malice* of any at present alive, to disgrace 'em *now.* For the *Memory of the Just is blessed, but the Name of the Wicked shall rot.* This was so great an Ornament to their Ministry, that I verily believe, we are yet spending upon the Stock of their Reputation : And I heartily pray that we may receive of the *same Spirit,* and be thought worthy to follow their Steps. *Other Men labour'd, and we are entred into their Labours.*

5. BY *an holy and blameless Conversation in the sight of God and Man.* This is absolutely necessary to the Reputation of the Ministry, and the contrary will effectually sink it, let their other *Qualifications* of Parts and Learning be what they will. All their fine Words will but freeze in their Lips, or seem but as *Thunder at a distance* in the Ears of their Auditors; little affecting their Hearts and Consciences. The *Greeks* were so sensible of this, that whenever a Man of an *Infamous Conversation* had given *Good Advice* to the *Lacedemonians*, they would take the Counsel out of his Mouth, and appoint a *Good Man* to deliver it to the People, tho' a *meaner Orator*. Men must have more than *Sermons* to instruct and lead 'em; for if *our Lives* do not bear Testimony to our *Doctrines*, they'll find but little Credit in the World. Indeed, the *Extraordinary Gifts* of the Primitive Preachers are expir'd; but their *Graces* never should: Their *Miracles* are out-dated; but their *Good-works* should never be antiquated. And here, I cannot forbear to go on
in

in the excellent Expressions of a great
 * *Divine* of our *English Church*. If,
 says he, our *Graces* and *Works* are not
 added to our *Sermons*, the force and
 efficacy of our *Preaching* vanishes :
 Our *Threats* will be taken for *Mormo's* ;
 our *Promises* for *Delusions* ; our *Exhor-*
tations out of Scripture for Acts of *Ty-*
ranny and *Oppression* ; laying those Bur-
 dens upon the *Peoples Shoulders* that we
 would not touch with one of our *Fin-*
gers. But if our *Lives* do witness to
 our *Doctrines* ; by letting them see us
 write those *Copies* with our *own*
Hands, which we require *them* to tran-
 scribe ; we shall not only persuade,
 but enforce our *Auditors*. This is the
 only *Honest* Way of insinuating our
 selves into our *Peoples Affections*, by
 convincing 'em how *heartly* our *Exhor-*
tations are, by our *own Zeal* to observe
 'em ; shewing 'em what *Miracles* of
 Reformation the Gospel is able to work
 on *them*, by an Essay of its Efficacy on
 our *own Breasts*.

THIS the Good Man, that is the Good Orator.

AND now, I shall direct my **A PPLICATION** of this Subject, first to *Ministers* and *People* distinctly; and then, to *Both* conjunctly.

First, TO MINISTERS.

THIS Doctrine, and this Example of St. Paul, may serve to reprove all such as diminish and debase their Sacred Office, I say, St. Paul shall reprove 'em, and not I, who am every way unfit for such a Work. And surely, there are not wanting many things, whereby we are tempted to dishonour our Ministry. Therefore I would beg leave in all Humility, and with a due sense of my own Imperfections, to mention a few; freely acknowledging beforehand, how justly it may be retorted to me, *Physician heal thy self.*

BY Ignorance, and want of a due Preparation for so great an Undertaking, before

before we enter upon the Ministry ; In order to which there are so many Qualifications necessary, that it Summons all our Talents and Abilities, our utmost Labour and Industry, to furnish us with proper Materials for this difficult and weighty Employment. Therefore it is acknowledged, that none should be devoted to, or vested with this Holy Office, but such as we have reason to hope are by Nature, Study and Grace prepared for it, 1 Tim. 3. 22. Lay hands suddenly on no Man.

BY Negligence and Carelessness in our publick Exercises ; not studying our Sermons diligently, but offering unto God that which cost us nothing. By aiming at a nice and mody way of Oratory, on the one hand, or by a loose and lazy Familiarity on the other ; equally unbecoming the Weight and Gravity of those serious Truths, that so nearly concern the Souls of Men.

BY feeding the People with the empty Shells of Circumstances and Ceremonials

in Religion, instead of the weighty Matters of the Law ; which is, building of Hay and Stubble, instead of Gold and Precious Stones ; or else, giving them the Husks of Controversie, and the Bones of Contentlon, instead of the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth.

BY too great an Omission of the Scriptures, which are the strength of our Discourses, the very Nerves of our Sermons and Arguments. And which even a learned * Jesuit in his *Eloquence of the Pulpit*, complains of, as one Occasion of the little Authority and Success of Preaching in these latter Days ; that we do not often enough produce our Commission from Heaven, **THUS SAITH THE LORD.** But too many seem to be afraid of spoiling their *Periods*, by quoting *Texts of Scripture* ; which indeed is just as wise as for a Lawyer to be afraid of spoiling his Oratory at the Bar, by citing *Statutes* or *Presidents*.

* Monsieur Rapin.

BY *not preaching Christ, or the Cross of Christ*; but instead of that, advancing *Seneca* or *Epicætetus* in his room; whereas the learned *PAUL* could say, *I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified*, 1 Cor. ii. 2. Or, by not distinguishing the First from the Second Covenant, and so preaching *MOSES* instead of *CHRIST*: Or else, which is worst of all, by preaching our *Selves*; our own *Pride* and *Vain-glory*; our own *Wit* and *Fancy*; our own *Passion* and *Revenge*; or our own *Policy* and *Interest*.

BY *restraining Prayer*; and losing that Ability, which hath been sanctified to so great Use and Service in the House of God, which is stiled an *House of Prayer*: Insomuch, that it is now look'd upon by many, as a *Gift of Miracles*, and not to be attempted or practised, as other Duties, in an *ordinary way*. Or else, by offering up this Sacrifice in a *cold* and *formal*, a *disorderly* and *irreverent* manner, Preaching or Talking instead of Praying.

BY *undue Administration of the Sacraments*; either prostituting those *Holy Rites* to such as have no Claim to 'em, and so *casting our Pearls before Swine*; or injuriously excluding those that might be worthy Partakers of the same Benefits.

BY *accommodating our Holy Office to secular Purposes*, for worldly Gain or Power; entering upon this Employment with an Eye to the Preferments of the World; and pursuing it in such a manner, as plainly betrays our Appetite to Riches and Honour.

BY *too mean Compliances with the Lusts of others*, especially those which are our Superiours in the World; *cringing* to their Vices, instead of *reproving* and *condemning* 'em; which is little better than to make Christ the Minister of Sin, and his Disciples the Priests of Ceres or Bacchus. John the Baptist gave us a better Example in his *Fidelity* to Herod, and St. Paul to Felix;
I'm

I'm afraid to subjoin *Ambrose* to *Theodosius*.

BY intermeddling with the Affairs of the World, that do not concern us ; contriving to exalt our Function above Civil Offices ; or endeavouring to set up an High and Independant Jurisdiction over the People ; or to twist in the Secular with the Ecclesiastical Power ; which, surely, Christ never thought of, when He said, *My Kingdom is not of this World*.

OR, Lastly, By an indecent and unsuitable Behaviour towards One another, and towards All Men.

TOWARDS One another ; By endeavouring to advance our selves above our Brethren ; when Christ hath told his Disciples, *It shall not be so amongst you, but whosoever will be Great among you, let him be your Minister ; And whosoever will be Chief among you, let him be your Servant ; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister*, Matth. xx. 26, 27. which He

takes care to repeat again, *Chap. xxiii. 11.* Which Words of our Saviour, so inculcated, one would think were enough to have cool'd any assuming *Diotrepbes*, and to have spoil'd the *lofty Hierarchy* in the Christian Church. Or else, by furious *Contentions* in Divinity, those *Rixe Theologorum*, the *Brawls of Divines*: By most vehement *Accusations* and *Censures*, upon Differences of lesser moment in Religion; nay, sometimes in the *nicest Points* of Controversie; painting out one another in the most vilifying Language, and thereby wounding the *Gospel*, and exposing the *Ministry* to the Contempt of the *People*.

TOWARDS *All Men*, by a *stiff, imperious, or fantastical Behaviour*; proudly assuming a *State* above 'em; being severe and morose among 'em, or disrespectful towards 'em: Whereas it is not only *Civility* and *Good Breeding*, but *Christianity* and a *Duty*, to be affable and condescending, *1 Pet. iii. 8.* *Be Pitiful, be Courteous.* Or, by a *base Familiarity* with 'em, on the other hand, in their *Sins* and *Follies*; by frequent-

frequenting those * *Places* and *Companies*, which the Christian Fathers do so sharply inveigh against; nay, and *which* there have been solemn *Decrees of Council* to inhibit. It becomes us to abstain from all *Occasions* and *Appearances* of Evil.

BY these *Mistakes*, and many more, we are in danger of *disgracing* our Ministry; which I fear hath been too often done; or we should never have needed so many *Admonitions* in Scripture, or such a *Scourge* from the World as the *Contempt of the Clergy*, and the *Rights of the Christian Church*.

2. TO the PEOPLE.

THIS Doctrine may likewise afford a *faithful Admonition* to them; that they

* Council of Laodicea, Anno 360. Can. 24. forbids all the Ecclesiasticks to go to a Publick House. And Can. 54. decrees, That Ministers ought not to be present at Shews or Balls.

Council of Carthage, Anno 397. forbids all the Clergy-men to be Farmers, Traders, &c. Nay the

Council of Sardica forbids all Bishops to go to Court, unless positively required by the Emperor's Letters.

do not despise an Office of so great Importance to their Souls, nor them that officiate in it. It hath been a mighty Pleasure to prophane Spirits, to bestow their Wit upon the Reproach of the Ministry; and nothing has better pleas'd the World than a Jest or Satyr upon their Office or their Work: As that Comedy of *Aristophanes* took best, which was all spent in laughing at *Socrates*. But they little think, whose Pleasure and Interest they are pursuing by the ridiculing *Taunts* and *Titles* they put upon the Ministers of the Gospel. Certainly, It is the Devil only that can be a Gainer by it: And perhaps, they could not take a more effectual Course to promote his Kingdom: Nor could they do any thing that should more directly tend to bring down Judgments upon themselves; for we find it was the last Sin, that preceded the Destruction of Jerusalem, that they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and mis-used his Prophets; until the Wrath of the Lord arose against his People, that there was no remedy, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.

BUT

BUT to come closer to my Design: It is possible for *You* to reproach our Ministry several ways.

BY *Unbelief* and *Impenitence*; not hearkening to the Voice and Counsel of God; but like the deaf Adder, stopping your Ears, while the Charmer charmeth never so wisely; continuing from Year to Year in a sinful unconverted State, under the Preaching of the Word of Life; Being *unfruitful*, and *disobedient*, walking unworthy of your Holy Calling, hardening your selves against the Reproofs and Exhortations that are faithfully inculcated upon you. — Of whom, I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the *Enemies of the Cross of Christ*, Phil. iii. 18. Your Hearts, it may be, are so deeply riveted in the *Business*, or captivated by the *Pleasures* of this World, that you cannot attend to the *Exhortations* of your Minister, and the *Counsels* of God; tho' indeed, all your other Affairs upon Earth are but *Toys* and *Dreams*, in comparison of this. For the Labours of
your

your daily Calling are but to prop up the Cottages of your *Flesh*, while you are making ready for Death and Judgment; which God knows is near at hand. What a discouragement, as well as dishonour is this to your Ministers, that they must *spend their Strength for nought*, and cry with the Prophet, *Hear ye Deaf, and look ye Blind! Hear O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth!* Fly to the most insensible Creatures in the World, because they can have no better *Auditors*; or like him that call'd to the *Altar*, to *hear the Word of the Lord*, because *Jeroboam's Heart* was harder than that. When our People are degenerated into this *incurable* Frame, our Preaching seems to be the most *uncharitable* thing in the World; good for nothing but to aggravate their Misery; like Breath when it meets with Fire, only to increase the Flame. For certainly, *It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the Day of Judgment than for that People*. We dread to think, that instead of being their *Convertors*, we must be no other than their *Tormentors*; because we are sure, that all we
 say,

say, will rise up in Judgment against 'em in the World to come, *John xii. 48. The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last Day.* Words so terrible and so true, that one would think should make the *Joynts of the guilty Sinner tremble.* The Word which thou now *slightest*, when thou hearest it; or *sleepest under*, so that thou wilt not hear it, is that *Law* of the Great King, which must govern thy Judgment, and pronounce thy Sentence *another Day.* Thus you render our Ministry *useless*, and make it *terrible.*

BUT further, You may dishonour our Ministry, by falling into Errors, and following Seducers; embracing those as the Ministers of Christ, which were never qualify'd for that Imployment, nor regularly sent forth by the Churches in his Name; receiving every Spirit, and not trying 'em, whether they be of God, or no: Or else refusing those, that have the Badge of Christ's Authority upon 'em, being rightly set a-part by the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, 1 Tim. iv. 14.

B Y

BY Censoriousness and Contempt of Ministers and their Performances, carping at every Imperfection; distasting almost every Subject they chuse, or their manner of handling it; and magnifying every Infirmary you behold in 'em: Not considering that they are yet in the Body, and that *Elias was a Man subject to like Passions with others.*

BY a poor and scandalous Maintenance; to the discouraging the faithful Labourer, the crippling of his Studies, and rendring him incapable of giving an Example of Christian Charity. So that He, that should be given to Hospitality, is perhaps, the very Person that needs it most.

AND, Lastly, By disdaining to devote your Children and Friends to the Service of the ALTAR.

INDEED, I have long wish'd for an Opportunity, to deliver my self freely upon this Head; And therefore it

it is impossible for me to pass by so fair a One as this.

GOD forbid, that any *Labourer* in the *Vineyard*, the *least* among the *Disciples* of Christ should be despised in what manner soever He obtain'd his Education : But yet I cannot but judge it a most *visible Contempt* upon the *Ministry*, that Persons of *Consideration* in the *World*, should think it too mean too imploy their *dearest Relations* in the immediate *Service* of the *Tabernacle*.

IS our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we acknowledge as our *Supream Head*, any way *lessen'd* in his Church of late ? Is the Gospel a *meaner Privilege* to the *World* ? Or are the *Souls* of Men of less Value than heretofore ? Greater than *You* or *Tours* have taken it as an Honour to be devoted to this *Holy Work*. *Kings* and *Princes* have not thought it beneath 'em to *minister* before the Lord. Was not *Melchizedeck* King of *Salem*, and yet *Priest* of the Most

Most High God? Was not *Moses* King in *Jesurun*; and yet a *Publisher* of the Divine Law? Was not *David* a *Royal Prophet*; and *Solomon* a *Preacher*? Nay, was not the *Son* of God himself the *Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, and yet styl'd also, the *Apostle* and *Priest* of our Profession?

I DO not mention these things, in the least to exalt the Ministry to any *Worldly Honour* or *Dignity*: But I must speak it with some kind of *Indignation*, in behalf of our common LORD, that so many seek their own, and not the things which are of *Jesus Christ*; and that almost every one thinks himself too *Great* for his Service. You are ready enough to imploy your *Selves* or *Children* in any *Office* of the *State*, though in many Cases to the hazard of *Body* and *Soul*: But when you are put in mind of the Dedication of 'em to the *Sanctuary*, Oh no! they are too *Good* for that: They would make *Great Men* in the *World*, *Men of Parts* and *Figure*; They have

a surer way to attain to *Riches* and *Earthly Glory*; We would make 'em, not *TEACHERS*, but *RULERS* in *Israel*.

THIS is a most *despicable* Way of treating the *Gospel*, and a turning the Back upon *Christ Jesus*. Must all be devoted to *this present World*, that is going into *Perdition*? Will every one turn away, *one to his Farm*, and *another to his Merchandize*? Hath *Christ* been so little a *Benefactor* to *Mankind*, that no *Returns* of *Gratitude* must be made to Him; no *Dedications* to his *Service*? Or are you afraid it is impossible they should live as *comfortably* or as *honourably* in this *Employment*, as any other? I plead in his *Behalf*, that these things may be better *consider'd* among *Christians*; that they would *Honour the Lord with their Substance*, and *with the First-fruits of all their Increase*: That as every *First-born* under the *Law* was *Consecrated to God*, so there may be some of that *Kind*, under the *Gospel* also, made *Holy to the Lord*.

FORGIVE the *Liberty* I have taken, because I have not spoken one word for my *Self*, but for my *Office*.

AND now I would conclude,
 3. In the *third Place*, with a Word of *Exhortation* to Ministers and People, *conjunctly*; That they would all strive together to promote the Ends, and maintain the Credit of the Ministry of the Gospel.

LET MINISTERS look upon their People as their Charge and Trust, their Joy and Crown; and labour Night and Day to advance the Prosperity of the Gospel, and the Welfare of the Souls of Men. Let us be diligent in our Studies, to provide suitable Doctrines, and to find out acceptable Words, that we may gain and convince our Hearers. Let us be warm and zealous in our Pulpits, vigorous and ardent in contending with Sinners; that we may not quench the Life of our own Sermons,

mons, by delivering 'em in a slothful manner, with a cold and drowsie Tone. Let us visit our several Flocks with a watchful Eye, and deal plainly with them all in a faithful Conscience; that whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, we may deliver our own Souls, and become a sweet savour unto God, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish. Yea, Let us bear 'em alway upon our Hearts, continually praying for 'em, and longing after 'em: As a Nurse cherisheth her Children, let us be affectionately desirous of 'em; willing to impart to 'em not only the Gospel of God, but our own Souls also, because they are dear unto us. 1 Thes. ii. 7, 8. And let us be ever careful to walk before 'em, in a Holy Example of that Religion, we recommend to their Love and Practice; that we may not have reason to lament at last, *They made me the Keeper of the Vineyard, but mine own Vineyard have I not kept.* But let us in all things behave our selves in such a manner, as that it may be truly said of us as it was of John the Baptist,

Baptist. He was a burning and a shining Light.

AND, Let the People look upon their Ministers as the Officers of Christ Jesus, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God. Do not distrust their Commission, when it is evidently found in the Gospel ; nor reject their Doctrine, when it is derived from thence ; nor despise their Persons, nor frustrate their Labours, nor harden your own Hearts against their earnest Expostulations and Reproofs : But let your Conversion be the Seal of their Apostleship, and your Obedience the Glory of their Ministry. And though there are many that shall question their Authority ; Judge of it by the Scriptures, and your own Experiences ; And if you find 'em there, you do but lose your Labour to seek further : But, if you will be so inquisitive, you shall soon perceive, that whatever Order hath been disputed in the Church, that of Presbyters was never denied.

RE-

RECEIVE 'em therefore as the *Ministers of Christ*, and hold such in *Reputation*. Take 'em as your *Guides*, not to follow 'em *blindly*, but as far as they follow *Christ*: As *Spiritual Rulers* and *Overseers*; not to have *Dominion* over your *Faith*, but to be *Fellow-Helpers* of your *Joy*: To receive the *Law* at their *Mouth*; not as *their Word and Command*, but as it is indeed the *Word of God*; the *Dictates of infallible Wisdom* and *eternal Truth*. And what remains, but that after our *Tongues* are silenced, and your *Ears* are stopped; when the *Eye that hath seen us shall see us no more*, and we must all lie down in the *Dust* together; We shall be your *rejoycing*, even as Ye are *ours*, in the day of the *Lord Jesus*. *Amen.*

FINIS.

(76)
Some Books lately Printed by Jonathan Robinson, at the Golden Lion in St. Paul's Church-yard.

ALL the *Practical Works* of the late Reverend and Pious Mr. Richard Baxter, in Four Volumes, in Folio; With a Preface, giving some Account of the Author, and of this Edition of his *Practical Works*.

Expository Notes with Practical Observations on the New Testament. In Folio. By William Burkitt, M. A. late Minister of Dedham in Essex. The Third Edition.

An Exposition on the Five Books of Moses, with Practical Remarks and Observations. In Folio. By M. Henry, Minister of the Gospel in Chester.

The Preacher: Or Discourses shewing what are the particular Offices and Employments of those of that Character in the Church. In Two Volumes in 8°. By John Edwards, D. D.

Veritas Redux — Evangelical Truths restored, &c. being the first part of the Theological Treatises, which are to compose a large Body of Christian Divinity. By the same Author. In 8°.

An Essay towards the Improvement of Reason, in the pursuit of Learning, and Conduct of Life. In 8°. By Jos. Oldfeild.

Consolations against the Fears of Death, with Directions how to prepare our selves to Die well, &c. By the late Reverend Mr. Drelincourt.

The New State of England, under our present Sovereign Queen Anne. Printed this Year, 1707.